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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - DECEMBER 2

¶1. (U) The items contained in this report consist principally of spot information from various sources. This report is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

Security Situation

¶2. (SBU) According to MONUC contacts in Goma, the CNDP has reinforced positions around Rugari (south of Rutshuru) and at Kibumba. The CNDP also continues to skirmish with PARECO forces at Buabo, about 8 kilometers south of Masisi. MONUC believes the CNDP will try to capture Masisi, so it reinforced the town on December 1 with a Uruguayan contingent. PARECO forces in Masisi are fleeing to the north.

¶3. (SBU) The CNDP has started to withdraw from some of the areas along the Kanyabayonga/Ishasha axis, although FDLR forces may be filling the gap. Nkunda has also said that he would vacate some recently captured areas north of Rutshuru if MONUC fills the gap; MONUC will reportedly reinforce its base at Rutshuru with a battalion of Indian peacekeepers.

Political Developments

¶4. (SBU) MONUC reported that the meeting between Obasanjo and Nkunda made no progress and that Nkunda struck an "arrogant" note afterwards with remarks about the FARDC's lack of capacity. Kabila has apparently called for a meeting in Kinshasa of the ten member states of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC). A MONUC commander believes that Kabila will appeal for military assistance, an "alarming development." (Note: CEEAC nations' military capability is questionable and deployment is problematic without foreign, i.e., Western, assistance. End note.)

¶5. (U) Press reporting notes that France has called for urgent EU talks on sending emergency forces to the DRC. European ambassadors responsible for security affairs are scheduled to discuss the EU response to the crisis in the DRC on December 2 and 3.

GARVELINK